

AN
AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS
OF THE
UNITED WESLEYAN
METHODIST ASSOCIATION
TO THE
PRIVATE MEMBERS
OF THE
METHODIST SOCIETIES;
WHEREIN THE DANGEROUS POLICY ADOPTED BY THE
CONFERENCE
IS BRIEFLY EXPOSED,
AS BEING THE FOUNDATION OF THE PRESENT GRIEVANCES OF THE PEOPLE;
AND THE
PRINCIPLES OF THE ASSOCIATION
SET FORTH, AS THE MEANS OF SECURING AND PERPETUATING A BETTER
STATE OF THINGS;
WITH AN APPEAL TO THE SOCIETIES ON THEIR BEHALF;
TO WHICH IS ADDED,
AN EARNEST APPEAL
TO THOSE MEMBERS OF CONFERENCE WHO HAVE BEEN UNWILLING
PARTIES TO ITS OFFENSIVE MEASURES.

"I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."--PAUL.

LIVERPOOL:

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1834.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CLERK
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1917

TO THE HONORABLE COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SIR:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the above-captioned matter.

Very respectfully,
J. H. [Signature]

AN

AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS, &c.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

THE present unhappily disturbed state of our Societies, as well as their future tranquillity, are matters equally interesting to *you* and to ourselves, and we therefore respectfully and affectionately solicit your necessary co-operation with us at the present juncture, in endeavouring to dissipate the tempestuous elements of dissension, and settle a happy tranquillity upon a permanent basis.

With this view, and in acknowledgment of our responsibility to you, we now briefly lay before you the motives and reasons which have urged, and which, we think, justify the deliberate but decisive steps which, as your Class Leaders and Representatives, we have been induced to take in the late proceedings.

Previously to the death of our revered founder, the Rev. Mr. Wesley, the relative circumstances in which he stood to the Connexion as its great originator, father, and protector, no less than the unbounded affections of his people, naturally placed in his hands the absolute control of the body, a power which he neither courted, nor, when held by him at the disposal of the people, used unrighteously, but to the glory of God, and to the welfare of the Church, his tenderness and liberality yielding even to popular prejudices.

At his death, the *Conference*, against his declared wish, seized upon this absolute authority. The people had not, nor had they reason to have, the same confidence in *them* that they had in *him*. They protested against the assumption, and claimed redress from the intolerance and oppression it brought upon them. Accordingly upwards of a hundred addresses, demanding a Constitution, were conveyed to Conference: That Reverend Body, being apprized that the documents were before them, it was *moved*, *seconded*, and *resolved*, that the said addresses *be not read, but forthwith burnt!* And they were committed to the flames

To pass over the mention of the ingratitude and deliberate insult thus offered to the Societies, we shall only remark upon the infatuation which could instigate the *inflammatory* proceeding, at the peril of the very existence of this oligarchical and manifest Confederacy against the people's rights. Decisive measures were adopted by the insulted party. The short-sighted offenders, thus brought easily and at once to a conviction of their folly, and a tacit acknowledgment of their weakness, an unsatisfactory "Plan of Pacification" was proposed in 1795, and further "Concessions" demanded and made in 1797; by which a certain degree of *power* was vested in the Leaders' Meetings. These transactions were regarded in the light of a SOLEMN COMPACT; a principal feature of which compact was, *to take out of the hands of the preachers the right of arbitrary expulsion*; and, on account of this important concession, the people consented to waive some minor, though by no means trivial, claims.

Since those periods, many invasions of our rights have been practised by an arbitrary stretch of power on the part of the Preachers; but these the people, from ignorance of the laws of Methodism in some cases, in others from a desire of peace natural to religious men, have passed over, or their complaints have been confined within the limits of their own circuit. In such cases, in the legal meetings of the people's representatives, this unbecoming ministerial usurpation of power has not unfrequently been severely canvassed: a motion then has perhaps been made, seconded and supported by a majority of voices,—but to no purpose: there is no redress. The culprit preacher steadily refuses to put to the meeting every motion reflecting in the least degree upon his own proceedings or those of the Conference.

The singular proceedings at Leeds in 1827, by the compulsory introduction of an organ into Brunswick Chapel by the Conference, by which the power legally vested in the Leaders' Meetings was trampled on, and *a thousand persons, for no other crime than maintaining the injustice of the proceeding, were expelled*, turned the public attention with an intense degree of interest to the state of Methodist government, and induced a suspicious vigilance over the subsequent proceedings of Conference.

Supposing the public interest to have died away with the intervening years, the Conference, again acting upon the same arbitrary and unconstitutional principles, have recently ventured to establish, on their own authority, the novelty of a *Theological Institution*; but knowing the general feeling to be against it, they have, in *this* instance, acted without even consulting it, and persevere in *defiance* of it.

Now the party (for it is only a small, though influential party) which originates these measures, if the people do not, just at this moment, exercise the legal right which the constitution of Methodism gives them, will be confirmed in the power, without redress on the part of the people, of making us *just what it pleases*; and this is the precise point of moment. The introduction of an organ into a place of worship, and the erection of a College, are matters, perhaps, of comparatively little importance;* but we implore you to consider in time, that the power that can graft *these* novelties upon the simplicity of Methodism can bring in *other* novelties; and what novelties they may introduce; that is, whether the Conference shall please to alter the doctrines, the discipline, or the modes of worship amongst us, make us Churchmen, or any thing else, will depend upon the caprice or interest of the party that may gain the ascendancy in it.

Your official Brethren have therefore been alarmed at the despotic authority which the Conference has exercised, in these two cases particularly, and look forward to the future with still more fearful anxiety.

The panic is abroad through our Societies. Measures of counteraction have been instituted at Manchester, under the patriotic and able direction of Dr. Warren, and thence the plans

* With regard to the *argument* for a College, we have to observe, and it will be admitted by the *promoters* of the Institution, that there never was a period in the history of Methodism when our preachers possessed that classical, literary, and general *knowledge* they do at present; and it must also be admitted that there never was a period when there was less INCREASE of our people. We know the increase exceeded 27,000 last year. But what is that, taking into account the twenty-fold greater number of labourers now than were then in the field? Though very *unclassical* days, those, however, were "days of the Son of man." The preachers *then* were giants compared with what as a body they *now* are. Methodism was then with the world a butt of persecution, and a Methodist preacher "a standing joke." Now, however, it may be said they have made a truce with the world; but where is their ancient strength? We are no advocates for ignorance; but we maintain that a Theological Institution cannot be proved to be *essential*. And there are strong reasons to suppose it would but strengthen the worldly feeling, already too rife. Besides, it is the want of a College which forms so interesting a peculiarity in Methodism. It is an historical example to the Christian world of the infinitely greater importance of *spiritual* than *academical* preparations for the ministry. The decay of *spiritual* energy and apostolical zeal is in exact proportion to the growth of worldly-mindedness, and a regard for important *trifles*. Nothing is more foreign than are such fashionable embellishments to the simple but powerful genius of Methodism. The same principles might be applied to the great Organ business at Leeds. But it would be painful to revive the recollection of those horrible associations which have fixed, we fear, an ineradicable stigma upon Methodist Conferences.

are extending through the kingdom,—the object of which is, to form an *Association of the whole of our Societies*, and, in one grand body, to make a stand against all further innovations; to demand redress of our injured rights; and to call the Conference to account for that abuse of power which the confidence and affection of the Societies have, in many instances, unsuspectingly overlooked.

In the case of *Mr. Stephens*, we have before us a striking anomaly: on a party question, one opponent tries another. We say nothing of the merits of *Mr. Stephens's* case: he may have been either right or wrong.* But here is the injustice towards him; he was tried, not by a tribunal legally and impartially constituted, but by a powerful Party bent on his degradation.

The case of the learned, pious, and venerable *Dr. Warren* is another singular instance of this violation of British feeling. It is the glory of the constitution of this country that no man can be tried, by whomsoever accused, though it were by his Majesty himself, except by his Peers, or by an impartial jury. But here, *Dr. Warren* is summoned before the very men whom he had just previously accused of improper conduct, and who, warm with indignation against him, were, in the nature of things, vindictively anxious to inflict punishment, rather than to do him justice. The absurdity of such a tribunal is monstrous: *who* would have submitted to it? And the Doctor, not allowed the counsel, or even the presence, of a single friend on the occasion, prudently refused to be tried by *such* a District Meeting; and has thrown himself upon the sympathy, the justice, and the gratitude of the Methodist public; and though it is *more* than probable that he might now make very advantageous terms with his persecutors, by consenting to drop the dispute, he nobly disdains; and has declared his resolution,—at all hazards, supported or forsaken by all,—to devote his remaining energies to the conservation of the institutions of Methodism, and the maintenance of the people's rights.

We need not recapitulate the circumstances of the ungrateful behaviour of the Conference towards *Dr. Clarke* in his honorable old age, by degrading him, against his will, from the ministry; a piece of unkindness which the Doctor keenly felt and pathetically complained of. It is sufficient to remark that *Dr. Clarke* was a *liberal man*: and so was *Samuel Drew*. And this brings us, as the next topic, to the "*Methodist Magazine*," so called.

* Upon the interesting "Church and State" question there is a difference of opinion.

Brethren, we ask you, Can *that* be said to represent the sentiments of the Methodist body which attempts to depreciate a man who stood so high in public opinion as Dr. Adam Clarke?—not to enumerate its invidious allusions to Mr. Drew, who, in public estimation, shared the honors of the great Mr. Locke! And shall its antiquated and stunted views of public affairs be sent forth to the world as those of our liberal-minded Society? The *Methodist Magazine* then is the organ of a party, and its title is a *misnomer*; whilst under the flimsy veil of an affected contempt it would conceal its inability to answer the heavy charges which lay against it and the unpopular party it represents.*

The consciousness of power begets "insolence of office." We scarcely dare wound your feelings by mentioning the indignities which, as your representatives, your Leaders are obliged to submit to. We are told by the resident Representatives of Conference that we have nothing to do with *their* laws but to *obey* them; that if we don't like *their* proceedings, we had better go about our business. As an instance of the consummate effrontery to which arrogance may elate itself, we may mention that a *Reverend* Gentleman declared from the pulpit, "We will rather sacrifice ten thousand of you than one iota of our *discipline*," as it is called. *Proh pudor!*

To sum up the whole in one word, the Conference are resolved to exercise absolute and irresponsible authority in the enactment of laws, and to take what steps they please to cut off all dissentients. This unjust, anti-Methodistical assumption of power

* Originating in the same source, the newspaper submitted in *prospectu* to the public by the same party, will, of course, flow in the same channel. It is, it seems, to be "adapted to the peculiar taste and convenience" of "the influential," but, we fear, will never rise to that of the "numerous," members of our Society. The donations of an "independent" or *wealthy* few may keep it in circulation; but donations will at length become inconvenient, if it be not adapted to the "*peculiar bias*" of the Methodist Public. It may, no doubt, represent the views of a *very* "eclectic," though limited, "school in politics;" and, it appears, is to furnish a great variety of information that can be had any where else—*every* thing, indeed, except just what the people want, namely, *a report of the proceedings in Conference*. On this account, we deliberately say *it will not do*. We would say nothing after the manner of our anxious opponents, to deter our Brethren from reading opposite statements, nor, to frighten them, characterize the journal that contains them a "wicked paper." The paper so alluded to, with all its alleged imperfections, its opponents will allow to have had, at least, this effect, *viz. to have opened the people's eyes*; and, if we be not greatly mistaken, those of the *Watchman* also; or he would not *yet* have *seen* the necessity of annoying the public from "his station on the tower" *by throwing dust into their eyes*. It is too late now, *however*.

we are resolved to our utmost to oppose, and reduce within its legitimate boundaries God defend the right !

To give a colour of propriety to their past proceedings, and to their intention of cutting off the individuals whom you have chosen for your Leaders, and whose religious worth and stability have gained your confidence, certain persons may throw out unworthy insinuations against those who are to be the next victims of inquisitorial judicature. On this topic we have only to say, You *know* your Leaders, and all they request of you is to be treated by you as they deserve. If they be not your personal friends, and the assertors of your religious liberties, abandon them: if they be, oh ! let gratitude, to say nothing of British love of liberty, urge you to stand forth and say, just at the present crisis, "They are our *friends*, and we will stand by them." If you do not, you *may* regret the consequences: for be assured, it is the determination of your rulers, if possible,—that is, if they be not intimidated by the formidable opposition now concentrating, to expel *them* also.

In such case, they have resolved, depending upon *your* support, to protest against every *mock tribunal*, (for the prosecutors and accusers, equally with the *accused*, are ineligible to sit on a *jury*,) still to consider themselves members of Society, to continue to meet as usual such of their class members as are agreeable, and receive their weekly subscriptions; which will go to form a second Contingent Fund. The Parent Association of Manchester has resolved to act upon the principle of not forsaking the Society on any account. Methodism, just now, is like a ship in a tempestuous sea. The man at the helm, anxious no doubt to be immortalized as "the Pilot that weathered the Storm," would show his cruel zeal by throwing overboard no small number of the ship's company, to *make her go easy*, as it is said: but *these* say, "No, no; *our* lives are as precious as *yours*; we'll stand by the ship while she *swims*." This alone will save her; and by and by the storm shall delightfully subside.

This principle of adhesion is *fundamental*. Next, it is requested that you pay no more subscriptions to any fund under the control of Conference; such as that arising from the July collection, the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools, the Missions, &c., except to the Treasurer or Secretaries of the Association, until our just claims upon the Conference are conceded; and, no doubt, this step will soon convince them, of what they seem so willing to forget or to deny, that, at least, *some* power is derived from the people; and that those who *receive* power from the people can be made responsible to the people for the right use of it.

Brethren! the Senate of this great nation, the Houses of Lords and Commons, and our Courts of Judicature, as becomes a free people, are thrown open to the public. Should an *ecclesiastical* synod, should Ministers of the Gospel, then have schemes to concert which cannot bear the light; should *their* transactions alone require secrecy? On the impeachment of a Minister suspected of immorality, the trial, at the option of the accused party, however, might perhaps prudently take place in privacy; otherwise they ought fearlessly to challenge the investigation of the world. Secrecy naturally induces suspicion; and the secrecy of Conference, in connexion with the lately developed elements of antichristian usurpation, gives to its sittings the odious resemblance to a conclave of sinister Cardinals in the Dark Ages.

We demand, then, that the Conference, to a certain extent, during all its sittings, be opened to the Methodist public. That the respectful Addresses of the Societies be no longer open to its contempt.

That all ambiguous laws and equivocal regulations of Methodism be revised, and extricated from that looseness which a cohort of District Police may ride through at pleasure.

And, lastly, that there be no more *Star-Chamber* Courts, or *modern* District Meetings.

This is the nature and extent of the Reform we demand; and the very existence of Methodism seems involved in its immediate consolidation.

That distinguished metaphysician, the late Mr. Drew,* conversing on the subject of the probable dissolution of the Methodist body, observes, "Do not, however, suppose that I consider the Methodist constitution indissoluble. There are many things tending to its disorganization, against which there must be a careful watch; ———; but nothing will prove so prejudicial as a *gratuitous display of power on the part of the preachers*. Against this the minds of the people will always revolt."

Let not *fear*, beloved brethren, deter you from acting with us. The cause is strong; and is daily growing stronger. At the *commencement*, 114 at Manchester, and 65 at Liverpool, of your Leaders, Local Preachers, and other officers, (and these neither "men of straw" nor destitute of character, as is cautiously insinuated by some, but including many of the most respectable, by reason of years of diligent and useful devotedness to the cause of Methodism,) signed the pledge of the Association; which will presently include within its ranks every member of the Methodist Society; if

* See the elegant and interesting Memoirs of his Life, published by his Son—p. 489.

they will but do us the justice candidly to examine our statements. This object will probably soon be achieved ; the question will then at once be decided ; and all that now seems dangerous to the cause of Missions, or to the Society, by withholding the funds, will disappear.

We love Methodism : it has been to us the channel of our earthly happiness, and the parent of our immortal hopes. We are, therefore, jealous for its stability. There is an opinion, rendered very probable by recent events, and entertained by many, that, on the part of the powerful few in Conference, and their aristocratical supporters out of it, there is a secret determination to assimilate Methodism to the Establishment, and, finally, to lay us snugly to sleep again upon her maternal bosom. In such case, that her honours and state revenues, making her Ministers independent of popular election, would extinguish the apostolical zeal of our preachers, and banish from the land all that we consider original, and great, and good in the mighty genius of Methodism ; may be reasonably anticipated ; if the *past* is allowed to illustrate what may be the *future* history of that church.

“ No man can serve two masters ; he must hold to the one,” and leave the other. If any gentleman, in the Conference or out of it, feel something of prejudice or of gratitude towards the Church of England, and is wishful to render her some signal service, he is unquestionably at liberty to leave us, and go to her. But he is *not* at liberty, if he were *able*, to transfer the Connexion bodily into her pale, against the conscience and the inclination of its myriads of members. The wish to do so is unjust ; the risk of the experiment is fearful ; for it is *Methodism*, confessedly, and not the Establishment, that has spread vital religion through this country. To return to her might indeed be to rebuild the ruinous fabric, but it would be on the ruins of Methodism ; whose majestic simplicity would then be lost amidst the gaudiness of Established ceremony, and her generous warmth in the coldness of Ecclesiastical supineness.

It has been declared by the supreme authority in Conference, that we are *not Dissenters*, we are of the *Establishment*. We can have no hostility to the Establishment as a *Christian Church*, but we deny this *assertion* ; and ask, How is it *possible* ? We are *Methodists* : those who unite with us are either from the Church or from the great body of Dissenters : the *former* cannot be said to be of the Church, for they have *left* it ; and to say that the Dissenters are, is a contradiction in terms.

It is the interest of some to characterize this opposition as *schism*, and to circulate *sermons* on that subject. It is schism that

we contend against, and might with more propriety have sent sermons to *them*. If they are wishful to guard you against party feeling, rancorous and uncharitable, we are obliged by their assistance. This *we* deprecate, and hope to avoid. But to stand up with Christian frankness, and maintain our religious rights, and the institutions of Methodism, ought not to be characterized as factious opposition. It is easy for the author of a "Farewell Address," or any other interested person, to denominate the present movement an attempt to scatter "firebrands" in the Society. But be not hoodwinked, brethren; judge for yourselves. *They* have scattered the firebrands, and lighted the torch of religious discord. We are endeavouring to *extinguish* them for ever. Insidious attacks like these, apart from argument, can only be regarded as deliberate misrepresentation.

Politics, we know, whether religious or national, are a feverish and morbid atmosphere, infectious, and often fatal; but, nevertheless, it is necessary sometimes to go within its influence rather than endure the greater evils consequent upon indifference. "Be quiet," is the ordinance of the opposite party; for *your* quietness is *their* success; and your credulity is to furnish the materials for your overthrow. Your past unlimited confidence, and your supineness amidst, or ignorance of, the intrigues of Conference, have laid the foundation of all our grievances.

We are accused of the crime of holding illegal meetings. How ill does this accusation come from those who are at this very time holding secret and equally illegal meetings throughout the kingdom! And especially cruel is the charge, when the Preachers *know* that they have determined, as is always their practice in such cases, on no account to put to the vote a motion of the Brethren on the subjects in dispute at the legal meetings. It is not now our *wish* to appeal to Conference: we appeal to the people.

On what have been termed illegal, or perhaps "factious" meetings, John Pawson, "that blessed man of God," as emphatically characterized by the Rev. Geo. Marsden, remarks as follows:—"You (the people) have not only built our chapels; but you bear every burthen of a temporal kind. Why, then, should you be excluded from having a proper share in the government, or at least in the regulation, of the church of God? Your Leaders being the most intimately acquainted with you, are the most proper to represent you. If you think it not safe to trust the Conference with your spiritual privileges, then, in the name of the Lord, I entreat you to keep them in your own power." In cases where the people object to a meeting composed of

the Superintendent, Trustees, Leaders, Stewards, and Local Preachers in the Circuit, he further observes:—"Then let your whole Society assemble together, and consider the matter as in the presence of God. And let this Christian and brotherly method be always taken in order to make known your mind to the Conference."

By this time you will probably have received the necessary prohibition from Head Quarters against attending the Public Meetings of the Society, intended to be convened in various parts of the kingdom in connexion with the Association. The reason of such a prohibition is obvious: shall we say, "That light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil?" However, this, at least, we think must be conceded to us, that the testimony to the propriety of such meetings, when the *Conference no longer have the confidence of the people*, is of very high respectability.

We love our Ministers, and "esteem them highly for their works' sake,"—but we have no MASTERS but Christ; and they and we, from the President of Conference down to the poorest among us, are BRETHREN. But say they, "Obey those that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." This text would equally well become the lips of a Pope's legate, *if* it required a blind subserviency to the secular elevation of Ministers of the Gospel. All that is meant, however, is, obviously, obedience to the *godly* admonitions of your spiritual *pastors*, or Leaders, "who *watch* for your souls as those that must give an account." Brethren, we ask you candidly whether the *Visiting system* of our Preachers amongst their flocks requires not *extension*? We ask not the friends in the higher circles amongst us; these, we know, have no cause to complain. We ask, Should pastoral visits be confined to parties of pleasure? Should they not be extended to those whose hard lot it is not to know what pleasure is,—save that of religion? Their circuit of calls ought, unquestionably, to encompass the whole Society,—not the higher merely, but the middle and inferior ranks; for *all* subscribe to their maintenance, and have equal right to their pastoral visitations. Your *Sunday Schools*, alas! fare no better. To what cause, also, allow us to inquire, are we to attribute the indifference manifested by certain rulers in Conference to your Revival Prayer Meetings,—the very womb of our Societies? But what redress have you, when the Preachers acknowledge no responsibility save to the Conference,—that is, to *themselves*? We say, that public approbation is a higher tribunal than that Reverend Body.

It is matter of shame before the world, and of deep regret

to Christians, that a warfare should at any time be carried on between Ministers and their Churches ; for love is the badge of a Christian Society. History, however, has shown us that even this may be necessary. But mistake us not herein : we say nothing in discredit of the private character or the pulpit labours of our Ministers ;—God forbid ! We affectionately caution you against this. It is only with their *official* character, as the agents of Conference, that we have to do ; in which official character a flaw can only be detected by your *Leaders* or *official brethren* ; which, by the way, may sufficiently account for the degree of ignorance on the alleged grounds of complaint, which has too long prevailed amongst our private members. We say, moreover, that, as the nuncios of Conference, the preachers act, in most cases, *at their peril* : any liberal conduct, such as taking the sense of the people against their masters in Conference, might meet with the most cruel chastisement. But still we are obliged to distinguish between those who act arbitrarily from *taste*, and those who do so from *fear*. It is upon the former that the present popular discipline is distinctly designed to bear ; to the latter, ample support and protection are respectfully offered whenever they show us that principle rises superior to fear.

Finally, beloved brethren, we have stated to you the grounds of our proceedings : we think our grievances are not imaginary.

In the part we are anxious you should take with us, let your motto be that of one of our late Kings, on ascending the throne : “ My principle,” said he, “ is, never to forsake my friends, to do justice to all, and to fear no man.” We see the shackles of your religious bondage already forged. We fear for the consequences ; to the preachers, to us, to yourselves, and, we may add, to the world. If you have a fellow-feeling with us, hold up our hands in the contest ; give us your confidence, your suffrages, and your good words ; and an early victory, honorable and advantageous to all parties, shall be achieved, and permanently secured. We invite you not to the heat of political excitement ; it is unnecessary. We ourselves had made a league with peace at all risks, and gladly had abstained from opposition ; but Providence has opened a path, and we cannot, we dare not, be supine. We exhort you, be not misled by mere statements. Remember, the *facts* we have mentioned are *historical* and *recent* : the inferences you may draw with ease. In what you do, be honest ; be clear in your conscience, in your understanding ; and be firm. *You* alone must decide how the present crisis of affairs shall turn : numerical strength, unanimity, and resolution naturally place in the hands of the people this decisive authority. But you must act *now*.

May the spirit of the ancient Reformers—may the God of the Fathers of Methodism—come to our help! While we are in the field, be you at the altar; so shall your prayers find acceptance, and our efforts the sanction of the Great Head of the Church,—accompanied by the heartfelt benediction of the friends of religious liberty throughout the empire, and throughout the world!

By Order of the Committees
of the

MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL
ASSOCIATIONS.

NOVEMBER 21, 1834.

✍ Societies desirous of being united with the Association, may communicate with WM. SMITH, Esq., of Reddich House, near Stockport; WM. WOOD, Esq. of Newton-street, Manchester; or with the President or Secretaries of any nearer Association.

TO THE MEMBERS OF CONFERENCE,—

UNWILLING PARTIES TO ITS INFRACTIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF METHODISM.

Dearly Beloved and Honored Fathers in Christ,

The foregoing Address to the People, our last, indispensable resource, will no doubt fall under your notice. We use it, therefore, as the vehicle of a respectful appeal *distinctively to you*. Reverend Sirs! We solemnly put it to your consciences in the sight of God,—Are our grievances not real? Have we *no* cause of complaint? Did you not fearfully anticipate the present crisis of affairs, as the *violative* measures of Conference severally came before you? Oh, why did you suffer such things to be transacted? Why did you not nobly interpose some seasonable mediation, which your numbers, if not your influence, enabled you, and your responsibility to God and the Church, bound you to sustain? Alas! the disaffection, the jealousies, the loss of souls you might thus have averted. We know that on the topic of the *people's* rights, the Conference fears and prevents the expression of opinion. But why did not magnanimity urge you to

burst the ignoble fetters? Could you not trust the sympathy of an affectionate Society? Be assured nothing is more distant from us than the wish to abridge your just authority; to make you slaves to popular caprice. God forbid! Your high relation claims, and we desire you to have, the pre-eminence. As the ambassadors of our great Master, we cheerfully yield you this just distinction. But, Sirs! we tell you boldly, we cannot, we *will* not submit to lordly arrogance, and priestly domination! Give us *your* confidence, and you shall have *ours*. Say not to yourselves,—believe not the information,—that the present explosion of public opinion, because it may appear sudden, will therefore be evanescent. The vibration will not be less permanent than it is general and simultaneous. The combustible materials have been *long* collecting. The application of the match to the train by the hand of Providence is all that is sudden and unexpected. No, it is not the explosion of a few shells merely, but the whole contents of a magazine: a *mine* has been sprung, and the hostile turrets are quivering, and the citadel totters to its fall!

The point of danger is the post of honour. A declaration on your part in favour of our rights *now* would at once decide the contest. Your hesitation may delay, but it cannot arrest, the fate of the battle. Hasten to lead us onward in this glorious warfare. It shall be crowned with certain victory: and the future historian shall record, "Then had the churches rest, and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." Hasten, then, to be enthroned in the affections of an anxious and grateful people. We have already provided for you: why should you demur? Be not ensnared to treat with contempt an affectionate expostulation. True, the other party may have secret sources of strength that we are ignorant of. We have calculated our own strength, and have little fear for the event. Agitation, when founded in right, is an engine of overwhelming destruction. Parliamentary reform is *one* of its trophies. We will not urge you: do as you please: but remember, He that comes into the field when the conquest is won, comes without honor.

By Order of the Committees
of the

MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL
ASSOCIATIONS.

November 21, 1834.